

BIOTERRORISM: FACTS AT A GLANCE

Facts about anthrax:

- Anthrax is a disease common in livestock in some foreign countries
- Anthrax cannot be transmitted between people
- Anthrax infection can occur in three forms:
 - ◆ **Cutaneous** (skin) is caused when anthrax enters the skin through a cut or abrasion
 - ◆ **Inhalation** may occur when anthrax is breathed into the lungs
 - ◆ **Gastrointestinal** may follow the eating of infected food products
- Skin anthrax is usually not dangerous if treated with proper medicine under a doctor's care

Facts about smallpox:

- The infection was eliminated from the world in 1977
- Smallpox virus may have been stored in some countries and might be available as a Bioterrorism weapon
- Symptoms include: high fever, fatigue, head and back aches. A rash appears on the face, arms and legs at the same time. Once a rash develops the patient is extremely ill and isolation in a hospital is strongly recommended.
- It can be transmitted from person to person after symptoms begin
- The majority of smallpox patients recover

Mail Handling:

What does suspicious mail look like?

- It's unexpected and from someone you don't know
- There is no return address
- It's lopsided or lumpy in appearance
- It has excess tape and/or postage
- Misspelled words

What should I do if I receive suspicious mail?

- Do not open it, shake it, or sniff it
- Put the mail in a sealed plastic bag, or put it down and walk away
- Wash your hands thoroughly
- Call the non-emergency police or fire department number in your area
- Your call will be directed to someone who will evaluate your situation with you and decide on further action

Web Links:

- County of San Diego: www.co.san-diego.ca.us
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.bt.cdc.gov
- California Office of Emergency Services: www.oes.ca.gov



Health and Human Services Agency
County of San Diego